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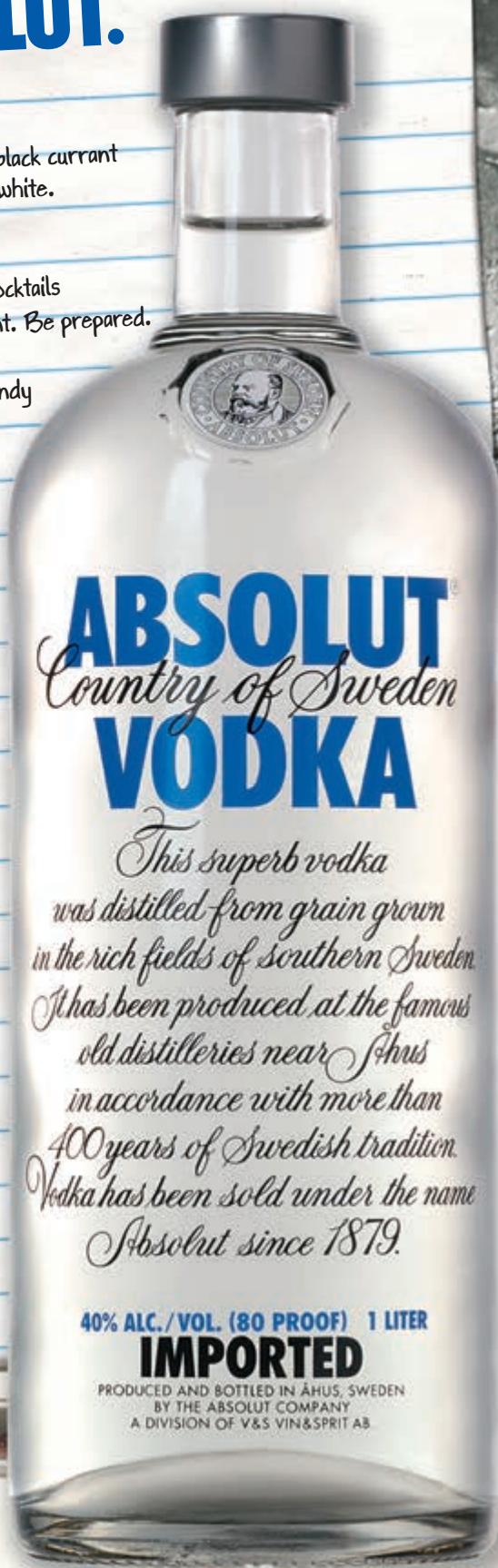
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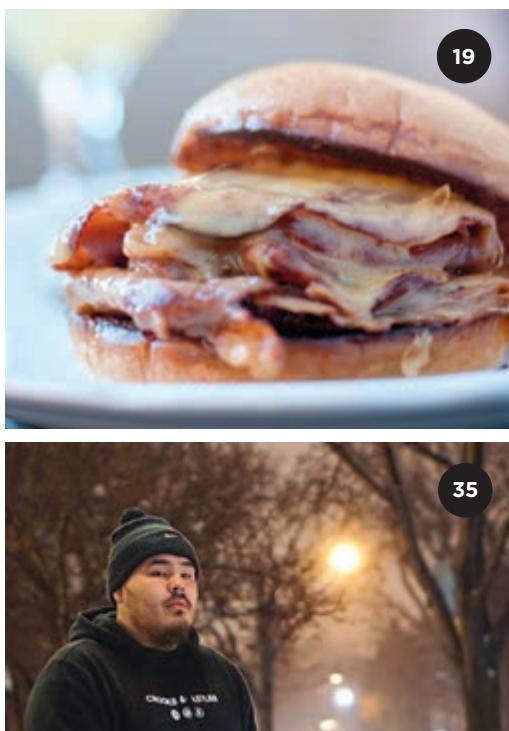
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CITY PAGES

January 13-19, 2016
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What happened to the nation's greatest college hockey program?

By Cory Zurowski

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SAVAGE LOVE
CROSSWORD

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Game Two: University of Minnesota
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SESSION II – Sunday, January 31

Game Three: Third Place Game
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Game Four: Championship Game
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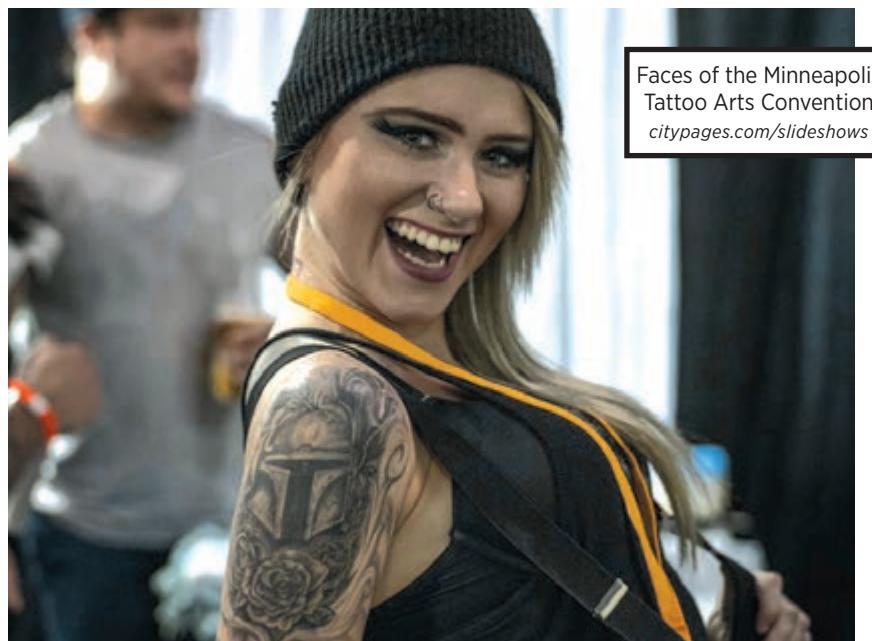
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THE SHORTLIST



Faces of the Minneapolis Tattoo Arts Convention
citypages.com/slideshows

THEATER

62

Number of times congressional Republicans have voted to repeal Obamacare

0

Number of plans they've offered as alternatives to Obamacare

6

Number of years they've been promising to do so

LANGUAGE ARTS

MINNEAPOLIS POLICE RANG IN the new year by seizing 100 kilos of high-grade marijuana at a grocery warehouse. Arrested was Steven Yang of Brooklyn Center, to whom the shipment was addressed.

More alarming was that the million-dollar seizure forced Hennepin County Attorney Mike Freeman to start speaking like a fifth-grade DARE teacher. "This is not your grandfather's pot that he had in the '60s," Freeman warned. "This stuff is really strong. It's bad news bears."

The danger, the prosecutor added, was compounded by the likelihood that Yang was not trying to acquire the load for personal use, since it's really hard to smoke \$1 million worth of pot, and Yang hadn't trained for such a feat. "He is selling it to make money," Freeman explained. "This is a lot of stuff that is going to mess up a lot of people."

"This is a great example on how to man up in front of a national audience. May our politicians take heed."

Reader Mike Bougie, responding to "Blair Walsh says 'it's my fault,' is great," at citypages.com

SPORTSMANSHIP

BEER PONG has a way of bringing together besotted friends. Except when disputes arise over the all-important question of where the cups should be set.

Two men at a Fargo house party were arguing about such weighty matters when Mason Haley turned his back. That's when Cody William Dzielinski chose to emphasize his cup placement theory by belting Haley in the face with a bottle, then repeatedly punching him in the face.

Haley was treated for a broken eye socket. Dzielinski was charged with aggravated assault, which carries the possibility of two years in prison. This should leave the pair with plenty of time to negotiate the ground rules for a rematch.

WHEN EVIL FORGETS

In a shocking turn of events, the Star Tribune forgot to oppress us

When the Star Tribune purchased this humble rag last spring, cries of horror pitched through the halls of City Pages HQ.

Actually, they were closer to feeble murmurs of anguish, but let's go with the horror thing for dramatic effect.

After all, rarely do good things arise when a large corporation absorbs a smaller species. Surely a battery of vampire accountants would soon descend, chuckling with words like "cost-consolidation" and "napalm" to announce the layoffs.

They would be followed by men in khakis with pressed shirts from the JCPenney Signature Collection, who would want to meet, then meet some more, only to hold further meetings.

They would look like Mitt Romney. They would not bring doughnuts. But they would chart a new editorial course,

one in which, yes, we'd be happy to run that guest column on the burdens of environmental regulation, sent by the Association of Guys Who Dump Chemicals Into the River.

Then a curious thing happened. The Star Tribune forgot to oppress us. As best we can tell, the Vice President of Soul-Crushing Initiatives was vacationing in Belize that week. Through a bureaucratic mixup, the Strib began to invest.

Writers joined the union, landing better pay and benefits. We moved from a dreary office, best suited for incubating thoughts of suicide, to a cheery new place the approximate size of the Des Moines airport. The desks adjust so you can stand while you type, in case anyone wants to look like a weirdo. Even the elevator works.

More important, the Strib sprung for a larger paper. Savage Love returned, providing sage counsel to the bedroom gymnast.

Dramatic rendering of Star Tribune accountant



MALCOLM MCCLENDON

We added a new crossword puzzle and Shortlist was born, written for those who like their news condensed to the size of a bar napkin. We also hired columnist Mike Mullen, finally giving voice to a people silenced for far too long: the white guy from south Minneapolis.

Today, we unveil a new design. With it, we hope you'll never again mistake us for a sci-fi fan fiction periodical from the early 1970s.

Yes, collisions of culture remain. The men in khakis still schedule meetings well beyond safety standards approved by OSHA. And when the new cleaning people find a liquor bottle under someone's desk, they rat them out — instead of doing the proper thing, which is to steal it.

But as with any new relationship, there must be give and take. It's just that the taking part is always better.

-PETE KOTZ, ATTEMPTED EDITOR

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JANUARY 13-19, 2016 CITYPAGES.COM 5

The Romance Queen of St. Paul

Author Barbara Longley still believes in happy endings

After enduring the last sentence of another disappointing romance novel, Barbara Longley snapped the book shut and pitched it into the back seat of her sister's car. The two were on one of their semi-regular cross country trips. Barbara often filled the road hours by nibbling through pulpy fiction.

"I could write something better than that," Longley announced, not for the first time.

But this time her sister shot back: So why don't you?

Longley didn't know the first thing about fiction. It wasn't until years later, after she'd taken creative writing classes, that she learned about terms like "inciting incident." That's the moment that changes everything for the main character.

This was hers.

At the time, Longley was working full-time as a special ed teacher in St. Paul. A divorced, single mother of two, she always had other jobs to make ends meet. She cold-called for blood donors and bagged booze at Sam's Club.

On her sister's dare, she started writing romance novels in 2005. It was harder than she thought.

Longley couldn't afford a computer, so she wrote on legal pads. She reached 300 pages of a modern spin on Jane Eyre, churning out prose as purple as a ripe eggplant, before she realized the book was beyond saving.

But her resolve held. Tell Barbara Longley she can't do something, and she will do it to prove you wrong.

Her second try was accepted by a small division of Harlequin, master of romance, but only published as an e-book. It sold poorly: Longley got quarterly royalty checks of \$40. Well, she thought, at least I can fill up my gas tank.

She kept at it, writing weekend mornings

**Longley got
quarterly royalty
checks of \$40.
Well, she thought,
at least I can fill up
my gas tank.**

and her summers off, editing and revising at night. In 2011, she wrote a novel set in rural Indiana, where she once lived, about a pregnant woman who falls for an Iraq War vet who lost a leg in combat.

Sales were moderately better. Then her publisher put the book, *Far From Perfect*, on a one-day sale online. Longley sold 6,000 copies. Word-of-mouth did the rest. Late last year, *Far From Perfect* sold its 100,000th copy.

"My goal was always to try to make \$30,000 a year from writing," says Longley. "Then I got a check bigger than that — in

one month."

Today, Longley has eight novels in print. Three are part of a Highlander-themed series set in medieval Scotland. Last fall, she quit teaching to write full time.

Harlequin, the heaving-bosom behemoth, issues its writers assignments to capture the zeitgeist of current tropes. (Yes, they use that word.) Sheiks are out this year, they'll say. Billionaires are in. Billionaires are almost always in.

But that kind of paint-by-number work doesn't interest Longley. Nor do hapless heroines she and her friends call "too stupid to live" — TSSL for short — the kind who get in near-death situations several times a week.

Her female leads are independent, strong-willed, and funny. Like their creator.

There are only two requirements Longley adheres to in meeting the "romance" genre. One she abhors.

"I hate doing the sex scenes," she says, describing the agonizing, paragraph-by-paragraph slog, the results of which have probably kept either of her children from ever picking up one of her books.

The other, for which she is unapologetic, is that romance novels always have a happy ending, some uplifting resolution. The heroine falls in love with the right man. Money problems are solved. Noah, the Iraq veteran and amputee who tried to save Ceejay, single and pregnant, realizes he needs her as much as she needs him.

Those characters have found an audience



Mike Mullen

beyond the bored housewife. She gets letters from veterans who loved her series featuring former soldiers. A long-haul trucker who lives in St. Paul always insists they meet for breakfast so he can get a signed copy of her newest book.

Longley's next work is well underway. It's a romantic comedy, and features a woman whose fiancé mysteriously exits her life. The woman's "wacky" mother decides to help her daughter by hiring a repairman who's known to be "handy" in more ways than one.

Longley doesn't want to give away the ending. Odds are, things work out for the best.

Happy endings seem rare in real life. That's why Longley likes them. If people want to read tragedy, they can pick up the newspaper.

She's right. There aren't enough positive stories in life. Maybe they're there, but we ignore them.

For example, there's this charming woman who taught special needs kids and struggled to support her children. Until, that is, her whole life changed.

Here's hoping she lives happily ever after. □

mmullen@citypages.com

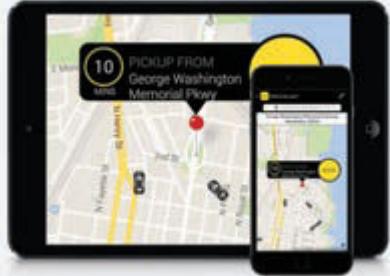
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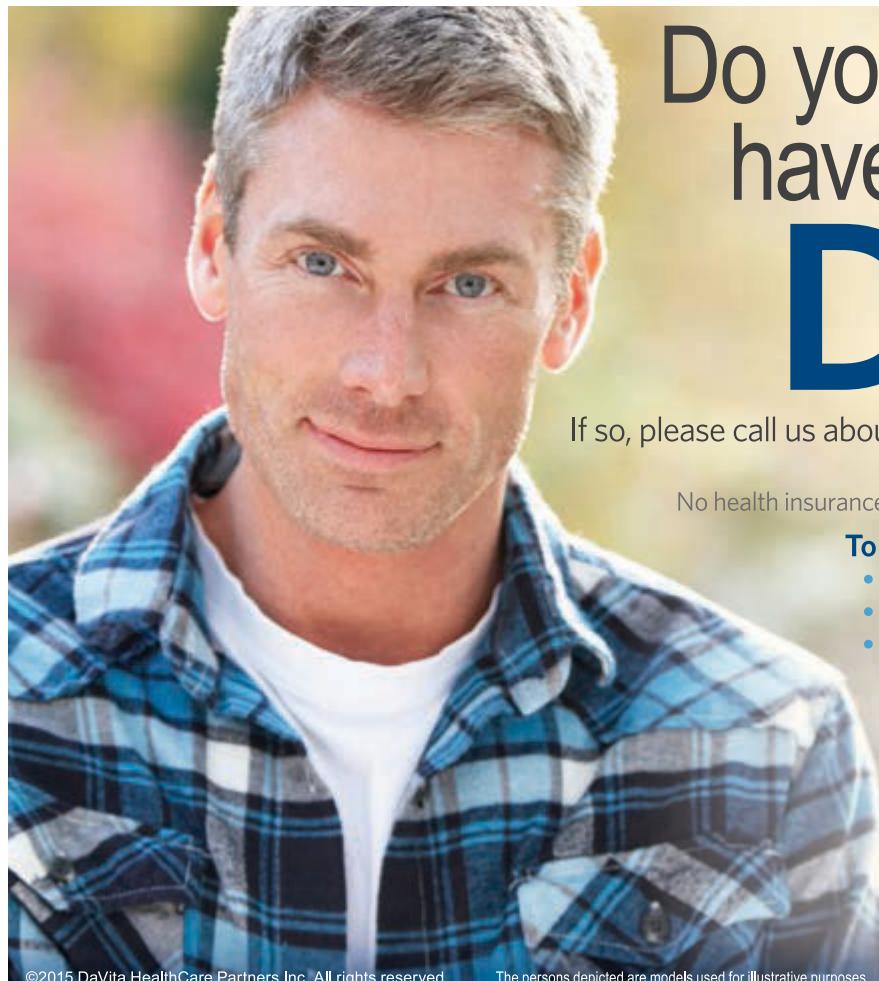
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POWER PLAYED



WHAT HAPPENED TO THE NATION'S GREATEST COLLEGE HOCKEY PROGRAM?

+
by CORY
ZUROWSKI

Photos by
BRUCE
KLUCKHOHN

His first love was a hockey team. On Saturday mornings, a pre-pubescent Reed Larson would climb into the family station wagon, dad Wes squiring him from south Minneapolis to the Barn, home to University of Minnesota hockey since 1949.

It was the late '60s. Larson would lace up his skates while inhaling the arena's funky broth of stale popcorn, damp wood, and

Zamboni exhaust.

He'd spend the next hours tearing up the ice during open skating, leaving only when someone chased him off. Then the future Roosevelt High star would find a place to hide.

"There were lots of nooks and crannies in there," says Larson. "I'd disappear and wait to come out when they started letting people in for the night's Gopher game.... It

was those early memories that began my lifelong love for the program."

Larson, who would play for Minnesota and become a three-time all-star for the Detroit Red Wings, was among the blessed. Generations of Minnesota kids could only dream of wearing the iconic maroon and gold "M" jersey.

As former Gopher and Mr. Hockey winner Joe Dziedzic notes, "When I was being

recruited, it was like anybody could make an offer, but if Minnesota called.... ”

It remains a beautiful dream to this day. Five national championships. Thirty-six NCAA tourney appearances. More than 60 players on U.S. Olympic squads. Gopher hockey is part of Minnesota’s cultural quilt like nothing else.

But the likes of Larson and Dziedzic can now be counted among the brokenhearted.

At Mariucci Arena, sold-out crowds have given way to lightly spackled congregations witnessing struggle. Games that once came with almost Biblical guarantee of victory are a thing of the past.

Where the Gophers used to have permanent residence among the nation’s top 20, they’re no longer even the best in Minnesota, losing 10 of their last 11 games against in-state opponents. And what was once a prideful alumni network has morphed into a full-scale revolt.

GROSS MISCONDUCT

On a Saturday night in December, the Mariucci scoreboard spurs the faithful: “Let’s Get Weird!”

The Gophers have already taken care of that.

Stacked with 12 NHL draft picks, they’re struggling to stay with Big Ten bottom-feeder Ohio State.

When the New York Rangers selected defenseman Brady Skjei three years ago, he became the 18th Gopher picked in the first round of the NHL draft. Almost 200 more have gone in later rounds.

Yet it’s this very lodestone of talent that’s come to haunt the team.

“WHEN THE GODFATHER OF GOPHER HOCKEY DOESN’T TRUST DONNIE LUCIA, WHAT DOES THAT TELL YOU?”

“At a program like Minnesota, you’re going to have high-end players,” says former Ohio State Coach Mark Osiecki. “But you can’t have your whole roster of that.”

The Gophers do.

Watch these days, and you’ll witness less a team than a constellation of child stars. Some were signed to scholarships as young as age 15, coated with praise since their grade school days. It’s akin to building a football team where everyone fancies himself a star quarterback. That’s left no



one to do the yeoman’s work of winning hockey.

Each game provides fresh fodder for the program’s decline, says one NHL scout. A disregard for fundamentals. Players giving up on their man in the defensive zone. An aversion to battling in front of the net. The habit of coasting to victories. Or, worse, losing to the less talented but hungrier.

“They run around all over with no discipline,” says Gopher alum Kevin Hartzell. “They don’t do the little things that are the most important. Getting traffic inside the dots. Winning puck battles along the boards. Never getting beat up the ice so you don’t give up odd-man rushes. What we’ve seen this program become is a glorified high school team.”

Contrast this with Minnesota’s supposedly lesser neighbors, schools like Duluth, Mankato, and Nebraska-Omaha, which have come to surpass the Goliath of Dinkytown.

Those teams may get the “leftover” players, those lacking the pedigree to find their way to the West Bank, says Pete Waggoner, a writer for Minnesota Hockey Magazine. “What happens is those players have to be a little more workmanlike, a little more lunch pail. You’ve got guys that are hungry, guys that are proud to wear that sweater and will do whatever they can to best represent it.”

The Gophers could not be more different. According to alumni who’ve soured on the program, Minnesota’s star system has bred self-admiration, stroked and infantilized

by a culture that doesn’t prize selflessness and hard work.

“You tell a 10th grader or even a ninth grader they’re going to be a Gopher, and for even the best of kids it’s going to be hard for them to think they’re not better than other people,” says one former player.

Another is more succinct: “They’re arrogant little jerks. They’ve been raised to be the kings of the land because they’re youth hockey players that are great. But they’re jerks. There’s no other way to put it.”

And this chorus of critics lays blame at the feet of one man: Coach Don Lucia.

“It’s his job to set the tone for his program,” says an NHL scout. “At Minnesota, what I see is a coach living off past accomplishments.”

FIVE FOR FIGHTING

College hockey has grown up. What used to be a smattering of Division I programs dominated by a handful of powers now pushes 60 teams. Talent once sowed exclusively in Minnesota, Michigan, and Massachusetts now rises from Florida, Arizona, and even Tennessee. Meanwhile, the game has gone from amateur pastime to feeder affiliate for the NHL.

A decade ago, roughly 20 percent of NHL rosters consisted of college players. Today, the number is closer to one in three, making the collegiate ranks the fastest-growing path to million-dollar contracts.

Former Denver University coach George

Lucia ranks among college hockey’s winningest all-time coaches, yet the Gopher hockey program’s struggles have reached epic proportions.

Gwozdecky says that puts enormous stress on a coach’s most crucial duty: getting kids to play for their team, instead of kneeling at the altar of singular glory.

“Everybody has their habits and their own hidden agendas,” says Gwozdecky. “As coach, you want to make sure the only agenda on everybody’s mind is to play for your roster. The challenge that presents for the coach is getting them to put their egos aside for the benefit of the team.”

Lucia’s resume would suggest he’s the man for this job. Now in his 17th season at Minnesota, the 57-year-old coach floats in rarefied air. He ranks among Division I’s top 10 in career wins, including national titles in 2002 and 2003. Over the past four full seasons, the Gophers have had more wins than any other program.

Detractors don’t argue with the quantity of wins. It’s the drumbeat of embarrassing losses to nether teams, the string of playoff defeats to squads with superior grit. As they see it, a program built on Herb Brooks’ dictatorship of hard work and selflessness has deteriorated into a confederacy of excuses.

Take a game earlier this season against Minnesota-Mankato. The Mavericks erased a two-goal lead with less than four minutes

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remaining, then completed the comeback with an overtime dagger.

After the loss, Lucia fingered a freshman's mental error for allowing Mankato to climb back into the game.

Weeks later, an NHL scout still broils.

"That sums up the state of the program. There's always an excuse," he says. "You blow a two-goal lead with three minutes in your own barn against an average team, and it's a freshman's fault. It's another example of how they've lowered their standards, and Lucia gets away with it, having an explanation for everything. It's like because they were once good, they don't have to work to be excellent now."

The problem starts with recruiting. More teams mean more schools are plying the rinks of Minnesota. So Lucia has taken to signing players before they're old enough to drive.

The Gophers already have five commitments for the 2017-2018 season. Shattuck-St. Mary's forward Scott Reedy announced his choice in 2014. He'd just turned 15. Luverne's Jaxon Nelson also pledged to play for the Gophers. He may not see the Mariucci ice until 2018, yet he committed last April, weeks after his 15th birthday.

It's risky business. With three years of maturation to go, no one knows if that kid will eventually show up as a rounded player or a cosseted princess.

"What's become if you're the University of Minnesota is you get all the low-lying fruit and you get it early," says Waggoner. "The program has become jumpy when it comes to recruiting. As a result, it's fallen into a trap. They generally get a vast majority of the players they want, but the teams don't achieve to the perception of how good they are."

During his 14 seasons in the NHL, Larson found a truth within successful teams.

"Character is huge," he says. "A team with no talent and character still goes farther than a team with all talent and no character."

That thesis was on display in 2014, when Union College pulled off hockey's greatest

The program remains part of Minnesota's cultural quilt like nothing else despite the fact the faithful have grown brokenhearted.

upset since the Miracle on Ice.

The Gophers were making their 12th appearance in a NCAA title game. On that evening in Philadelphia, Minnesota was stocked with 14 NHL draft picks. Union consisted of afterthoughts.

But they would humble the Gophers, firing 50 shots and winning 7-4. It was a testament to the old-school clichés: that grit, hustle, and discipline are the coin of the realm in this game.

The loss gnaws to this day, but its lesson resonates more than ever.

Alumni are quick to note that character players still populate every Gopher team. Yet the game remains a defining moment of Lucia's tenure.

"The Union game was the most high-profile example of how the program under him falls short," says a pro scout. "Minnesota consistently — and it's only gotten worse with time — doesn't show the discipline required to be an elite program."

THE DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY

The turning point came a decade ago with a household name: Zach Parise.

The Shattuck-St. Mary's star was the quintessential Gopher of yesteryear, bringing an ore miner's work ethic to both ends of the ice. He was a Herb Brooks prototype. But Brooks didn't want him playing for Minnesota.

As alumni tell it, the legendary coach believed his former program had devolved into a bejeweled shell, where ice time was promised instead of earned, and names on the back of jerseys meant more than the "M" on the front.

He told Parise his development would take a hit if entrusted to Lucia. Parise chose

North Dakota instead.

Other former Gophers were surprised, but not shocked.

"Parise is exactly the kind of character guy you want representing your program," says one alum. "And here you had Herb Brooks telling him he should go to North Dakota. When the godfather of Gopher hockey doesn't trust Donnie Lucia, what does that tell you?"

More blue chippers have followed the path leading away from Mariucci. Blaine's Riley Tufte will play for UMD next season. Edina's Kieffer Bellows, son of former North Star Brian Bellows, has committed to Boston University. Burnsville's Brock Boeser, a first round draft pick, skates for North Dakota.

If there was ever a player with a Gopher pedigree, it was Chaska's Shane Gersich. Dad Frank played for Minnesota in the 1980s. Uncles Neal, Aaron, and Paul Broten

Bjugstad can't explain the post-Gopher development boom. "That's a good question. Maybe it's because some guys make better college players than pro players and vice versa."

Meanwhile, acrimony between alumni and Lucia has continued to fester. What began as organic rift between an outsider coach — Lucia graduated from Notre Dame — and a dynastic tradition has widened during the post-championship years. After winning two titles a decade ago, Lucia had no use for them, treating long-tethered relationships with indifference, if not disrespect, alumni say.

"What makes the relationship between the head coach and alumni unique is many of us live in the Twin Cities and Minnesota, and still are involved with hockey, be it as youth coaches, junior hockey, whatever," says a former player. "Ties to the local hockey community have helped

"IF A KID IS GOING TO MINNESOTA," SAYS ONE NHL SCOUT, "CONCERNS ARE OPENLY DISCUSSED IN OUR ROOMS ABOUT HOW IT MIGHT AFFECT HIS DEVELOPMENT."

are Gopher legends.

But Gersich, a Washington Capitals pick, plays for North Dakota.

"It's a combination of things," says an alum. "... Lucia doesn't invest in [the players] to work to become great. Then, when there's 'T' guys on the roster, he doesn't rein them in. How are these kids going to reach their potential as players if there's no accountability?"

Brooks' misgivings endure. In more than a dozen interviews for this story, the same take emerges.

"If a kid is going to Minnesota," says one NHL scout, "concerns are openly discussed in our rooms about how it might affect his development. If one of our players is heading to say, North Dakota or UMD or [Nebraska-Omaha], we are comfortable with them going to any of those places."

Alums point to the Florida Panthers' Nick Bjugstad as the latest example of immense gifts that were underserved at Minnesota.

Bjugstad "has more talent in his thumb than most will ever have," a former Gopher says. "He was a good college player who's now exploding into a star in the NHL."

Other players — like Winnipeg's Blake Wheeler and Nick Leddy of the New York Islanders — have likewise blossomed after leaving.

make the program. But he couldn't care less. When guys reached out, he blew them off. When there were alumni events, he barely popped his head in."

The chasm deepened when Lucia hosted a Notre Dame fundraiser at his home a few years ago. Alumni chafed. He'd never done that for Minnesota, they charged.

They further seethed the following year when Lucia courted former players only after the program needed money for a Mariucci renovation campaign.

These days, the relationship has become reality TV meets Lifetime movie running in perpetual syndication.

An email sent to Gopher hockey alumni demonstrates the extent of the brokenness. In 2011, after four seasons in which Minnesota was a collective seven games above .500, reports surfaced that then athletic director Joel Maturi was working on a contract extension for Lucia.

A few alumni responded with a mass email.

"There are thousands of Golden Gopher hockey fans that are in agreement with former Gopher hockey players...who are beyond shock and concern for the state of the hockey program," the letter began. "If you were to poll these former players...you would find a majority who would vote to

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remove Coach Lucia and his staff."

Lucia had failed not only as coach, it continued, but also as a "judge of talent" and a "recruiter." It further asserted that "recruits are encouraged to turn pro because scouts don't feel they will progress in the program."

The email was a call to arms to prevent Minnesota from becoming a "laughing stock." Alumni were urged to unite for Lucia's ouster. Otherwise, it warned, "A contract extension would be devastating."

Maturi announced a new three-year deal months later, saying, "Don is a championship-caliber coach and is deserving of this extension."

Lucia coolly downplays the rift: "I'm going to do the best job I can.... It's impossible to please everybody."

To which one former player counters, "I love Gopher hockey. It's part of the fabric of who I am. And it's become fuckin' painful."

DELAY OF GAME

But that pain also arises from forces outside Lucia's control.

Hockey's evolution and the shiny allure of the NHL bait more young players. Where four-year careers were once the norm, defecting underclassmen are now commonplace.



When pitted against grittier foes with equal and even lesser talent, Lucia's Gophers have chronically shown they can't win ugly.

"Players' aspirations have changed," Minnesota alum Craig Sarner says. "Some of us were lucky enough to live the dream of playing for the Gophers, and if you had a professional career after that, you were fortunate. A lot of players come through now looking at it as a steppingstone to the NHL. That makes the coach's job harder, but

it also gives him the opportunity to recruit character guys, the best players he thinks will take ownership in the program."

Many regard this as Lucia's greatest trespass.

"It's on him to say to his players, 'I don't care if you don't give a shit to bleed maroon and gold,'" says a former Gopher. "But while

you're here, you're going to bleed maroon and gold."

Last summer, All-American defenseman Mike Reilly decided to forsake his final season to sign with the Wild. Months earlier, teammates Adam Wilcox and Brady Skjei announced they too were leaving for the pros. More than 20 players have departed early during Lucia's tenure.

Former Hobey Baker winner Brian Bonin believes if players are enabled to distraction, it has the potential to undermine the entire program.

"You have no sense of anybody but yourself, yet it affects everybody else," he says. "It affects your attitude toward the team, the university, and the tradition.... In order for that not to happen, players must have trust in the coach. A player has to believe he's there and what he's trying to do will help both you and the team succeed."

THE DON

Big Ten Network host Rick Pizzo says reports of a Gopher Armageddon are greatly exaggerated.

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asked that 10 years ago, Minnesota would have been in that conversation," Pizzo says. "Five years ago, Minnesota would've been in that conversation. And today, Minnesota is still in the top five and it's not going anywhere anytime soon."

Ryan Kennedy, a writer for the Hockey News, says programs tend to follow two tracks. Schools like Union, Mankato, and St. Cloud are stocked with older players who were seasoned in juniors after leaving high school.

"They build organically with maybe a draft pick or two," Kennedy says. "But I kind of joke it's a team of 23- and 24-year-olds."

That's not Minnesota, Michigan, or Boston College, whose rich traditions land the best young talent.

But with so many young stars playing only two or three seasons before taking

tory as the age of recruits creeps lower still.

"The hard part becomes, at some of these ages, you don't know when you have to do it," Lucia says. "Somebody else could come behind the scenes, bring in a kid and offer him and tell him he's got a week to decide.... All of a sudden he's gone. He's off the board. And so that's sometimes the hard part. Do we have to recruit this kid in 11th grade? Do we have to recruit him in 10th grade? Or do we have to recruit him in ninth grade?"

Either way, players like Bjugstad say the fealty to the "M" at center ice has never faded.

The players know the significance of putting on that logo," he says. "...There was nothing more I ever wanted than to play for the U and win a national championship."

Lucia agrees. All those banners fluttering above the rink haven't lost their luster. "What

"I DON'T CARE IF YOU DON'T GIVE A SHIT TO BLEED MAROON AND GOLD. BUT WHILE YOU'RE HERE, YOU'RE GOING TO BLEED MAROON AND GOLD."

flight, it's become all the more difficult to compete against older teams.

Kennedy's advice to the Gopher faithful: Save yourselves some heartbreak and adjust your expectations.

"The Gophers are caught in a catch-22," FOX North announcer Frank Mazzocco says. "They'll typically get blue-chip players. What happens to these players? They get plucked off the vine faster."

At the same time, increased competition has forced Minnesota to sign players at younger and younger ages.

Lucia was conscripted into the practice reluctantly, contending the Gophers either had to play or lose out.

"It was a lot easier when you got to know the kids better," he says. "You had a better sense of where they were in their development stage when they're 17- and 18-year-olds rather than 15- and 16-year-olds."

What Lucia's detractors fail to acknowledge, says those who believe the criticism unfair, is that college hockey is under assault. Players fast-track development by leaving high school early for junior teams. Then they commit to colleges knowing full well they're gone when an NHL club offers a contract with enough zeros.

"These aren't necessarily Gopher problems," says Minnesota alum Ben Clymer, a FOX North analyst. "They're college hockey realities."

Lucia wishes the simpler days would return, yet he knows they belong to his-

we say to all of our guys is embrace the tradition, but also create your own tradition."

THE STICK HANDLERS

University execs haven't done Gopher hockey any favors.

"There's been a commercialization that's taken it out of strictly being a college program," says Sarner. "It's no longer about the students or the student athletes. Money has become the driving force."

The state's flagship school dines at the Big Ten trough through football and men's hoops. This year, Minnesota is projected to pocket about \$35 million in TV cash.

But this meant that Minnesota was also required to join a new Big Ten hockey league, bidding farewell to longstanding rivalries. Seven o'clock puck drops in Grand Forks and Duluth were swapped for yawners with Penn State and Ohio State.

"Playing on the Big Ten network, playing against Penn State. Are you kidding me?" asks Waggoner. "...The university showed it didn't understand nor did it care that in hockey proximity breeds rivalries. The university got their money and Minnesota's core fans are now apathetic."

And as the Gophers have declined, so have their opponents.

"I think the most shocking story in college hockey is how bad the Big Ten is," says the Hockey News' Kennedy. "We all assumed it was going to be a sort of elite conference,

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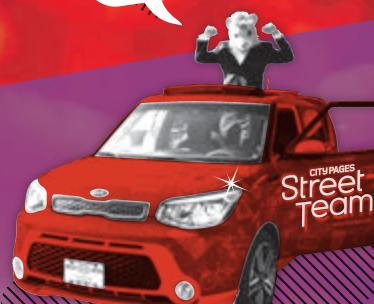
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Dating back to last season, Minnesota has lost 10 of its last 11 games against in-state opponents, including this one against St. Cloud earlier in the season.

and that the other schools would be hurt by it. Instead, it's been the other way around."

As a result, alumni see cash-first administrators with no reverence toward the rich hockey tradition — or any comprehension of its systematic decay.

"They're like, 'Don's a nice guy and he's pleasant to be around,'" says a former player. "His teams win a lot and he does have a couple of national championships. Why would we want to make a change?"

CHANGE ON THE FLY

Lonely is an empty Mariucci on an afternoon in December. Three days have passed since St. Cloud swept Minnesota, providing more ammo to the notion that the Gophers are no longer golden.

This is the Pride On Ice's new normal.

During this practice, special teams are the order of the day. Thoroughbreds wearing cages stop on a dime, then accelerate like machines. One makes a sweet dish to a linemate, who rips a one-timer so powerful the eyes fail to keep up. Yet languor dominates. Players stand around a lot. Most of the chatter comes from coaches.

"Gopher hockey is at a crossroads," says Waggoner, "as to what's expected, what it stands for." CP

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BY MECCA BOS

There's something about Saint Dinette that is classically St. Paul, like the Sunday farmers market, or the river.

Maybe it's because it evokes the saintly city's name or because owners Tim Niver and Jd Fratzke have been devoted to the capital for almost a decade with their Strip Club Meat and Fish (and soon-to-open Mucci's). Whatever the reason, after less than a year in business, Saint Dinette already feels right at home. It sits high on a perch, overlooking all of Lowertown, like a crow on a telephone wire: sleek, regal, seemingly all-knowing, yet familiar.

On the mezzanine level of the Rayette Lofts building, Saint Dinette is a modern stage for Old World technique. It's where

Niver and Fratzke have spent their days thinking about French culinary influence in North America — New Orleans, Montreal, Mexico, and yes, even St. Paul. From these musings, the two men drew up a set of parameters for Saint Dinette, to make it a North American French restaurant. “And within this, you can do so much,” says Niver.

To the casual observer, the North American French concept is not apparent. Probably it needn't be. For me, a lifelong St. Paulite, this is simply a St. Paul restaurant. Any establishment that lists dilly beans as its first offering is a St. Paul restaurant through and through. A little saucer of these before you, for just three bucks, along with a superb cocktail, can take the work out of ordering. Grab some straight away.

While you're at it, put the bologna sand-

wich on your list of starters. It's inspired by a Montreal specialty, and chefs all over the country have been going bananas and sticking versions of it on their own menus. Like most truly inspiring dishes, it's the sum of a few precious parts assembled to glorious effect. Paper-thin slices of bologna get fried until frizzled toasty at the edge, then pressed greasily into one of those squishy buns with melty cheddar and house pickles. The outcome is delectable, salty, savory, and elemental as a White Castle slider. It's also easily my favorite thing on the menu. They could close up shop and sell these alone and be wildly successful.

The Saint Dinette double smash cheeseburger is already at the top of everyone's list, as it models the au courant way to cook a burger. Two patties are smashed thin and cooked to medium, cloaked in

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bombastic amounts of processed cheese, and the whole thing is slipped onto that familiar squishy bun, garnished only with a green cluster of house pickles at its side.

Niver says this “two sandwich set,” which they worked incredibly hard on, will never go away. Aside from that, there are no sacred cows on this menu.

If you're the sort of person who likes Minneapolis' longstanding 112 Eatery, then you're the sort of person who will probably also like Saint Dinette. Think of this as an across-the-river version of that urban bistro for all people and all occasions. Both are the



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sorts of places that are unafraid to mash up a crock of bar nuts with a seared foie gras preparation. Or a pot of French fries with tartare, which in fact both restaurants do. Both vary their price points from just a few dollars up into the \$20-plus range, so that "everybody can eat here." It's an ideal they want to adhere to for as long as the restaurant exists, says Niver.

Everyone can also drink here, from \$3 cans of Pabst to queenly craft cocktails for \$10. Try the "La Adelita," which drinks like a diminutive margarita with beautiful tequila, herbaceous green chartreuse, sugar, citrus, and a blast of Jamaican bitters. Or drink wine because the selections here trend toward affordable, drinkable, and just barely on the other side of "everyday." Special, but not too much so.

It's apparent that Chef Fratzke is having a bunch of fun with this menu, tinkering not just with geographical and ethnic traditions but also celebrating kitsch and cleverness. The boudin comes garnished with potato chips. At the holidays he gave us a turducken, served with cranberry and pepper gravy that was every bite of Thanksgiving — so evocative of the holiday table it was almost disconcerting. Potato latkes came served with little synagogue-basement paper cups containing a dollop

each of creme fraiche and apple butter.

He's also having a go at finer things: a smoky carbonara over fresh spaghetti finished with fried oysters; a Mexican-tinted octopus with chorizo and black beans. But the kitchen seems careful to never make things too cerebral. The tartare is served with Ritz crackers; the short ribs come with kraut and kielbasa.

In many ways, the place feels like it's been thrumming away forever. Fratzke and Niver are seasoned pros well into their careers, so this is no amateur restaurant. As with any operation where Niver handles the front-of-house, hospitality is tantamount. He says his training ethic is one where staff are allowed to be "who they are," while maintaining high standards of service. They're always friendly yet efficient, personable but super pro. They'll remember the last time you were in, and maybe even what you ordered.

And what you order need only be esoteric if you want it to be. If you suddenly find yourself breathlessly wishing in the night that you could dine at a French-influenced North American restaurant, well then, you're in luck! But if you're a St. Paul girl with a simple hankering for a bologna sandwich and a dilly bean or two, you're equally fortunate. **EP**



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SATURDAY, JANUARY 16

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17

FRIDAY, JANUARY 22

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23

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ERIC MAYSON
LEXII ALIJAI
MURDER SHOES
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TUESDAY, JANUARY 26

KQRS PRESENTS HAPPY BIRTHDAY JANIS: A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE AND MUSIC OF JANIS JOPLIN
WITH OPENING ACT FROLEG
\$13/\$15/7PM/18+

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29

PBR AND SO GNAR PRESENT SEAN ANONYMOUS 10TH ANNUAL BIRTHDAY SHOW FEATURING SEAN ANONYMOUS & DJ NAME SIMS

GREG GREASE CRUNCHY KIDS

SOPHIA ERIS (DJ SET)

LIVE ART BY CHUCK U

\$10/\$12/8PM/18+

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6

CITY PAGES PRESENTS RYAN BINGHAM

\$25/7PM/18+

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11

GODSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR

XYLOURIS WHITE

\$25/7:30PM/18+

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12

89.3 THE CURRENT PRESENTS LIZZO FEATURING DJ SOPHIA ERIS

\$20/8PM/18+

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20

FIRST AVENUE AND GREENROOM MAGAZINE PRESENT ISLAH TOUR PART 2 KEVIN GATES

\$25/8PM/18+

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

93X PRESENTS GYPSY CARAVAN TOUR WOLFMOTHER

DEAP VALLY

\$20/7:30PM/18+

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25

ST. LUCIA

GRACE MITCHELL

\$20/7:30PM/18+

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 29

T PRESENTS NIGHTWISH SONATA ARCTICA DELAIN

\$37.50/\$40 DOS/5PM/ALL AGES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9

89.3 THE CURRENT PRESENTS TY SEGALL & THE MUGGERS

FEELS

\$20/7:30PM/18+

THURSDAY, MARCH 10

FIRST AVENUE AND THE CEDAR PRESENT LAKE STREET DIVE

THE SUFFERS

\$25/7PM/18+

SATURDAY, MARCH 12

DAUGHTER

\$16/8PM/18+

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23

89.3 THE CURRENT PRESENTS LUCIUS

PURE BATHING CULTURE

\$20/\$22/7PM/18+

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FIRST AVENUE & 7th St entry

ALSO COMING TO THE MAINROOM

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 3/18 | THE PINES "Above The Prairie" Release w/ PHIL COOK, STOLYETTE 18+ |
| 3/19 | GREENSKY BLUEGRASS 18+ |
| 4/03 | MUTEMATH 18+ |
| 4/06 | GLORIOUS DEAD PRESENTS: FLATBUSH ZOMBIES "300: The Tour" All Ages |
| 4/09 | 89.3 THE CURRENT PRESENTS THE CURRENT'S ANNIVERSARY PARTY FEATURING LOW JOHN MARK NELSON MIXED BLOOD MAJORITY BAD BAD HATS BONES & BEEKER \$20/7PM/18+ |
| 4/10 | 89.3 THE CURRENT PRESENTS THE CURRENT'S ANNIVERSARY PARTY FEATURING TOMMY STINSON GRAMMA'S BOYFRIEND THE CACTUS BLOSSOMS GOSPEL MACHINE BRUISE VIOLET \$20/7PM/18+ |
| 4/19 | ANDREW BIRD 18+ |
| 4/22 & 23 | BOB MOULD 18+ Savage Imperial Death March Tour featuring NAPALM DEATH, MELVINS, MELT BANANA 18+ |
| 4/24 | COURTNEY BARNETT - SECOND SHOW ADDED 18+ |
| 4/27 | TINA AND THE B-SIDES 18+ |
| 5/07 | |

7TH ST ENTRY

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1/14 | THE MISSING LETTERS and KICK w/ HOLY WHITE HOUNDS, BENJAMIN RAYE 18+ |
| 1/15 | TEENAGE MOODS RELEASE SHOW w/ BRILLIANT BEAST, CONSTANT INSULT, DAISY CHAINS 18+ |
| 1/16 | DUSTIN THOMAS 18+ |
| 1/17 | BOOSQUAD & FRANKIE BASH w/ ELI THE PROPHET AND MORE 18+ |
| 1/20 | MIC Q.A & SIEED BROWN "A FAMILY FUNCTION" 18+ |
| 1/21 | GUANTE and DIS-PLAY w/ ANDRE MARIETTE AND MORE 18+ |
| 1/22 | CITY OF SOUND VINYL RELEASE PARTY w/ HOT DATE, PORNO WOLVES, MANIC PLANET 18+ |
| 1/23 | LOWER DENNS w/ INVISIBLE BOY 18+ |
| 1/26 | THE KNOCKS "ROUTE 55 TOUR" w/ CARDIKNOX 18+ |
| 1/27 | UMAMI and BAYONNE w/ BEASTHEAD 18+ |
| 1/28 | THE AMERICAN DEFORMITY TOUR PART II ft. INVIDIOSUS, DEFEATED SANITY, INIQUITOUS SAVAGERY, INIQUITOUS DEEDS, FACE OF OBLIVION 18+ |
| 1/29 | MODERN RADIO SWEET SIXTEEN ft. SICBAY, STNNNG, FURY THINGS, B.O.Y.F. 18+ |
| 1/30 | DAVE RAVE AND THE GOVERNORS, RICH MATTSON AND THE NORTHSTARS, LOLO'S GHOST 18+ |
| 1/31 | CARROLL w/ RUPERT ANGELEYES 18+ |
| 2/01 | GRIZFOLK w/ MAX FROST 18+ |
| 2/05 | MEAT WAVE w/ RAD PAYOFF 18+ |
| 2/06 | WET w/ KELSEY LU 18+ |
| 2/07 | MARTIN COURTNEY 18+ |
| 2/08 | BORA YORK and MASS GOTHIC w/ MAZED 18+ |
| 2/10 | GABE DOUGLAS & FRIENDS w/ MRDR, GRAMMAR 18+ |
| 2/12 | ACT OF DEFIANCE 18+ |
| 2/13 | ANDREW RIPP w/ SWEAR AND SHAKE 18+ |
| 2/14 | DIANE COFFEE 18+ |
| 2/16 | MARGARET GLASPY 18+ |
| 2/17 | ANDY FRASCO & THE U.N. 18+ |
| 2/18 | COMMUNION: TWIN CITIES ft. ALLAN RAYMAN, LOLO, WHISKEY SHIVERS, MOONRISE NATION 18+ |
| 2/21 | CAVANAUGH (OPEN MIKE EAGLE & SERENGETI) 18+ |
| 2/27 | AUDIO SOCIAL DISSENT 2016 ft. WOLF EYES, TIMMY'S ORGANISM, VIDEO 18+ |
| 3/01 | JULIA HOLTER 18+ |
| 3/02 | ELLIOTT BROOD 18+ |
| 3/10 | BLANCK MASS 18+ |
| 3/11 | RADIATION CITY w/ DEEP SEA DIVER 18+ |
| 3/12 | PROTOMARTYR 18+ |
| 3/16 | HUNTER VALENTINE 18+ |
| 3/18 | KORDA 3 SHOWCASE ft. JIM RUIZ SET, THE OCEAN BLUE, THE INNOCENCE MISSION, DEEP POOL, THE STARFOLK 18+ |

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UPCOMING SHOWS AT OTHER VENUES



FRIDAY, JANUARY 15

HARI KONDABOLU
w/ **RAGHAV MEHTA**
at the WOMAN'S CLUB
\$15/\$18/7PM/ALL AGES



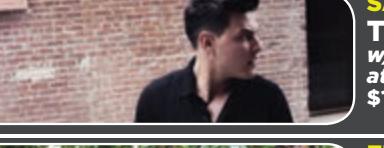
MONDAY, JANUARY 18

BULLY
w/ **FAKE LIMBS**
at the FINE LINE
\$15/7PM/18+



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27

CITY Pages presents JOSH RITTER & THE ROYAL CITY BAND
w/ **ELEPHANT REVIVAL**
at the PANTAGES THEATRE
\$35-\$45/7PM/ALL AGES



SATURDAY, JANUARY 30

TOR MILLER
w/ **SEAN MCVERRY**
at BRYANT LAKE BOWL
\$12/9:30PM/18+



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5

HIPPO CAMPUS
89.3 The Current and KUMD present
at CLYDE IRON WORKS (DULUTH)
\$12/6:30PM/ALL AGES



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6

CASPIAN
w/ **O'BROTHER**
at the TRIPLE ROCK
\$15/8PM/18+



MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22

JASON ISBELL
First Avenue, JAM, Northrop, and 89.3 The Current present
w/ **SHOVELS & ROPE**
at NORTHROP
\$40/6:30PM/ALL AGES



FRIDAY, MARCH 11

An Evening with LILY & MADELEINE
at ICEHOUSE
\$16/10:30PM/21+



SATURDAY, MARCH 12

CLOUD CULT
First Avenue and 89.3 The Current present
An Evening With
at the STATE THEATRE
\$30-\$35/7PM/ALL AGES



THURSDAY, MARCH 17

Set In Stone Tour STICK FIGURE
w/ **FORTUNATE YOUTH, RAGING FYAH**
at the TRIPLE ROCK
\$15/7PM/18+



SATURDAY, MARCH 19

AN EVENING WITH GREG DULLI
An Evening with
w/ **special guest DERRICK BROWN**
at the CEDAR
\$30/7PM/ALL AGES



7th St entry

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A LIST

FRIDAY Standup Hari Kondabolu P. 27

SATURDAY New art at Rosalux P. 28

SUNDAY U.S. Figure Skating Championships P. 29



Laura Stack teams up with Valerie Jenkins for a show featuring abstract pieces

conflict between public interest and private enterprise. When oil is found beneath the streets of Paris, profit-minded entrepreneurs scheme to extract the liquid gold — regardless of whatever damage might be done to the surrounding neighborhood. Opposing the plan are the local denizens, comprised largely of a motley crew of idealists. In this production, *Ten Thousand Things* focuses on the humanity at the center of the story, recognizing the innumerable hardships faced by those in the neighborhood. Under the direction of Sarah Rasmussen, the talented ensemble intends to reflect a world not so different from our own, suggesting a place where the people of a community, regardless of economic bracket, remain its most essential asset. \$30. 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays; 4 p.m. Sundays. At Open Book (1011 Washington Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-215-2600) January 15-24 and February 4-7; at Bedlam Lowertown (213 Fourth St. E., St. Paul; 800-838-3006) January 28-31. **Through February 7** —BRAD RICHASON

COMEDY

JERMAINE FOWLER

TURF CLUB

New York-based, Maryland-raised Jermaine Fowler hasn't risen through the ranks of comedy solely on his sense of humor; he's also arguably one of the most ambitious entertainers in the industry today. Appearing on TruTV, HBO, Comedy Central, and Showtime, the 27-year-old has made the rounds, dispensing anecdotal humor. Whether he's revisiting a grammar-challenged aunt's Facebook rant, giving up his seat on the train to the pretty woman rather than the pregnant one ("You're already pregnant! Give someone else a chance to get pregnant!"), watching porn in the library, or doing "baby math" (Q: How many babies does it take to ruin somebody's life? A: One.), Fowler leaves audiences howling. Thursday's stop at the Turf Club is part of the nationwide tour in support of his first comedy special, *Give 'Em Hell, Kid*, released last

WEDNESDAY 1/13

COMEDY

ROSS BENNETT

ACME COMEDY CO.

With his slightly disheveled hair and black-framed glasses, Ross Bennett is a pretty distinctive-looking guy. He dropped out of West Point in the mid-'70s, just in time to catch the first big wave of standup comedy. He's been a headlining comic ever since. His unique looks are a consistent source for his comedy. "I should be used to the way people mock how I look, but it still

hurts," he admits to an audience. "I had a woman say to me she wouldn't sleep with me even if I were the last man on Earth. And it wouldn't have bothered me, but we weren't even having a conversation. I was parking my car. Crazy lady comes up and bangs on my window, 'It's not going to happen, forget about it!' Bennett is known for doing what he calls "clean and clever" comedy, but that doesn't mean he won't talk about some grown-up things. "Some people say I look like a teacher," he says. "One guy said I looked like the science teacher he suspected of smoking pot. Today class we're going to use our Bunsen burners a little differently, so

Bobby stuff the wet towel under the crack in the door and we can start class." 18+. \$15-\$18. 8 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday; 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. 708 N. First St., Minneapolis; 612-338-6393. **Through Saturday** —P.F. WILSON

THURSDAY 1/14

THEATER

DEAR WORLD

OPEN BOOK/BEDLAM LOWERTOWN
Adapted from Jean Giraudoux's 1943 novel *The Madwoman of Chaillot*, *Dear World* casts a critical eye on the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26 ▶



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- 1/14 JERMAINE FOWLER "GIVE 'EM HELL TOUR" W/ BRYAN MILLER, MAGGIE FARIS 7PM
 1/15 SAM CASSIDY VIDEO RELEASE W/ ACTUAL WOLF, ROMANTICA 8PM
 1/16 FILTHY ANIMALS, PANTHER RAY, CLEMENTINE 8PM
 1/17 JAZZ BRUNCH W/ JAMES BUCKLEY TRIO FT. JAMES BUCKLEY.
 BRYAN NICHOLS, JT BATES 10AM - 3PM (NO COVER/ALL AGES)
 1/17 CHARLIE PARR: EVERY SUNDAY IN JANUARY W/ MATT ARTHUR AND THE BRATLANDERS 7PM
 1/21 KILL THE VULTURES W/ THE HAND, ANDREW BRODER 8PM
 1/22 SOLID GOLD W/ SUZIE, UMAMI 8PM
 1/23 20 DOLLAR LOVE 20TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL W/ DUMPSTER JUICE AND MORE 7:30PM
 1/24 CHARLIE PARR: EVERY SUNDAY IN JANUARY W/ SUPERIOR SIREN 7PM
 1/27 HEY MARSEILLES 7PM
 1/29 NEW SOUND UNDERGROUND AND THE HEARD 8PM
 1/30 MODERN RADIO SWEET SIXTEEN FT. VAMPIRE HANDS, HOLLOW BOYS,
 THE CHAMBERMAIDS, OAKS 8PM
 1/31 OUTLAW BRUNCH W/ THE FEDERALES 10AM - 3PM (NO COVER/ALL AGES)
 1/31 CHARLIE PARR: EVERY SUNDAY IN JANUARY W/ WILD HANDS 7PM
 2/02 HOUSE OF DOSH II: A MONTH LONG RESIDENCY 8PM
 2/04 THE GILDED PALACE SINNERS - THE MUSIC OF GRAM PARSONS 7:30PM
 2/05 MALLMAN W/ THE MELISMATICS, CATSAX, LUNCH DUCHESS 8PM
 2/06 AU PAIR (FEATURING GARY LOURIS AND DJANGO HASKINS) 8PM
 2/09 HOUSE OF DOSH II: A MONTH LONG RESIDENCY 8PM
 2/11 MN MUSIC COALITION PRESENTS BEN LUBECK OF FAREWELL
 MILWAUKEE W/ SILVERBACK COLONY, MARY BUE 7PM
 2/12 THE CACTUS BLOSSOMS W/ SPIDER JOHN KOERNER + A LATE NIGHT SET BY THE ICICLES 8PM
 2/13 THE CACTUS BLOSSOMS W/ FRANKIE LEE + A LATE NIGHT SET BY THE ICICLES 8PM

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A-LIST**CONTINUED FROM THURSDAY ▶**

month. With a new sitcom in the works for CBS based on his life as the offspring of teen parents, this relatable and endlessly innovative comic won't be performing in rooms this small for long. \$15. 7 p.m. 1601 University Ave. W., St. Paul; 651-647-0486. -ERICA RIVERA

DANCE**DANIEL FISH**

WALKER ART CENTER

Anyone familiar with David Foster Wallace knows that the writer was a tennis player and a fanatical follower of the game. Of Roger Federer, he wrote, "The thing with Federer is that he's Mozart and Metallica at the same time, and the harmony's somehow exquisite." Here he is describing a "Federer moment": "My spouse says she hurried in and there was popcorn all over the couch and I was down on one knee and my eyeballs looked like novelty-shop eyeballs." In Daniel Fish's *A (radically condensed and expanded) Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again After David Foster Wallace*, tennis balls fly while five actors channel Wallace as they listen to his words streaming through headphones. In a kind of physically charged karaoke, they scurry around trying to catch and reprise Wallace's often baroque sentences from a script that changes with every performance. Cobbled together from Wallace's writings and recordings, which are mixed live during the performance, this spontaneous sampling seems like the perfect eulogy for a writer whose prose can certainly set your eyeballs zinging around in your head, and whose eccentric harmonies are truly exquisite. In addition, Fish's film *Eternal*, in which two actors re-create the final four-minute scene of Michel Gondry's film, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, on a double-screen projection, will be shown at 1 p.m. on Saturday, January 16. \$25; \$20 Thursday. 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. 1750 Hennepin Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-375-7600. **Through Saturday** -LINDA SHAPIRO

ART/GALLERY**MINNESCAPES**

GALLERY ONE AT OST

The four Minnesota painters in this show reiterate the ways in which "contemporary" and "landscape" remain open to interpretation. Patricia Gilmer Reinert abstracts her sensory experiences of geography and space into lines and splotches of exuberant color. Meanwhile, Raelee Edgar, Krista Lee Johnson, and JuliAnne Jonker are representational artists, with Johnson

capturing the mood of a primeval forest with palpable sensations of both illumination and foreboding. There will be an opening reception from 4 to 7 p.m. Thursday, January 14. 800 Washington Ave. N., Minneapolis; 952-738-2046.

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FOR VISUAL ART

JON NEUSE

Art upcycling seems to be something of a trend. For example, through January 30, Kolman & Pryor Gallery is inviting people to bring in their unwanted canvases in exchange for \$1 and a chance to see the art incorporated into new work in a future show. Meanwhile, the prolific and stylistically gregarious Jon Neuse has assembled a new body of work — collages, actually — out of his old paintings, collages, and other works on paper. If you've ever been to a Neuse studio sale, you've experienced the joyous awe unique to finding yourself immersed in his range of pieces, which convey startling vivacity. These dynamic new collages, mounted on panel, are textural and architectural, and exhibit Neuse's keen sense of form and composition. There will be a public reception from 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday, January 14. 250 Third Ave. N., Minneapolis; 612-247-1244. **Through January 23** -CAMILLE LEFEVRE

with print media created on commission. But this invitational shows how seven well-regarded illustrators also maintain vibrant studio practices in which they create work incorporating digital media, found objects, watercolor, and pencil. Mary Bergherr's abstract shapes and mark-making energetically fill space while Ulana Zahajkewycz's mythological storytelling conjures references to European folk tales, Native American legends, and American folk art. Linda Frichtel's exuberant abstractions, Tom Garrett's striding forms, and the detail inherent in the work of Anne Vagt, Eric Hanson, and James O'Brien all attest to the rich sophistication these artists bring to their more commercial commissioned work. There will be a public reception from 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday, January 23. 210 N. Second St., Minneapolis; 612-436-1151. **Through February 20** -CAMILLE LEFEVRE

FRIDAY 1/15

ART/GALLERY CURRENT LOCATION

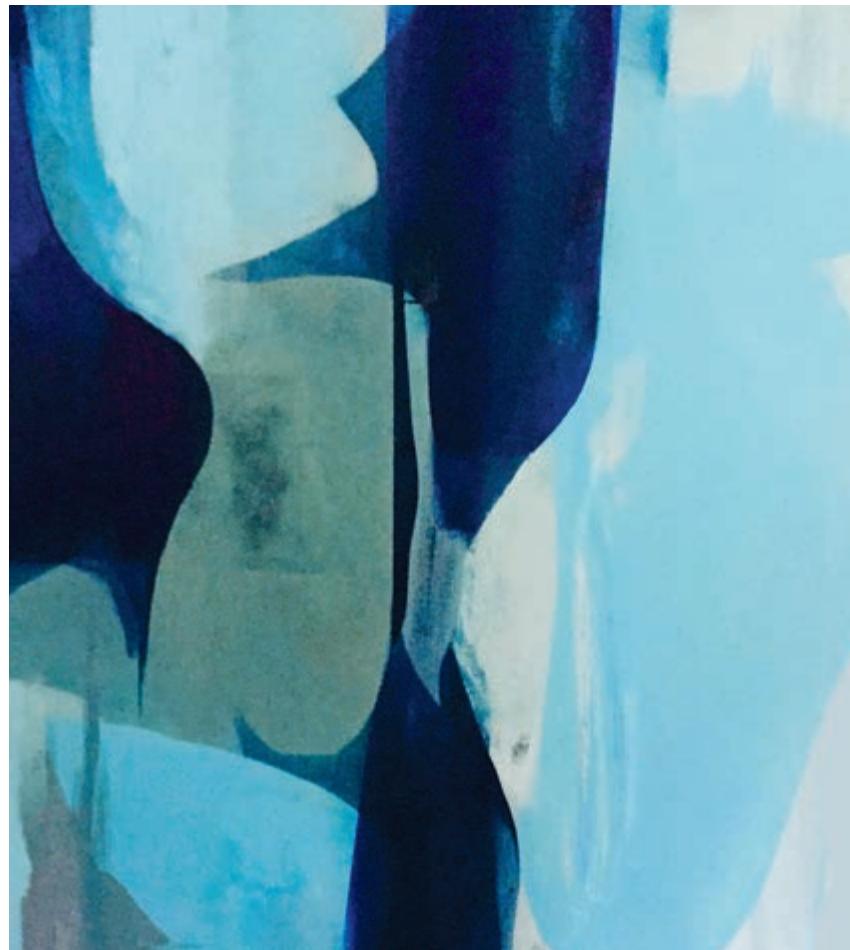
WAITING ROOM

Once upon a time, would-be travelers consulted maps made out of paper to plan their journey. Nowadays, we just hit a button on our cell phone. In 2016, a map isn't something we take out or put away; it alludes to a continual state of being as our government and consumer overlords retain our every movement, phone call, and web search. In "Current Location," opening at the Waiting Room gallery off Loring Park, artists ponder our sense of place in the world through the various ways we mark our location, both in current times and historically. Curated by Mary L. Coyne and Jehra Patrick, the show meditates on our existence beyond archaic and modern methods of assigning us scientific coordinates. The exhibition features artists Joseph G. Cruz, Kristina Estell, Isa Newby Gagarin, Jessica Henderson, David Horvitz, and Kathryn Miller. There will be an opening reception from 7 to 10 p.m. Friday, January 15. 1629 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis. **Through February 28** -SHEILA REGAN

THEATER THE BEST BROTHERS

OPEN EYE FIGURE THEATRE

It has not been the greatest of weeks for the Best brothers at the start of Daniel MacIvor's play, the latest production from Loudmouth Collective. Their mother has just been killed in an unusual accident at a gay pride parade. This incident has forced the long-distant pair to come together to hash out their differences while they



LINDA FRICHTEL

See what artists get up to when off the clock

settle the terms of their estate. The two-man play digs into what has driven the duo apart with plenty of comic touches, especially as they consider how they will go on without their mother. This isn't the first time Loudmouth has tackled the work of MacIvor, as they crafted a deft version of his one-man *Cul-de-Sac* a few years back in the same space. The playwright's off-kilter examinations and small scale fit perfectly with Loudmouth's intimate approach. This time out, veteran actors David Mann and Wade A. Vaughn take on the roles of brothers Kyle and Hamilton. Loudmouth's Natalie Novacek directs the short, two-week run. \$10-\$15. 8 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays, plus Monday, January 18 and Thursday, January 21. 506 E. 24th St., Minneapolis; 612-874-6338. **Through January 24** -ED HUYCK

THEATER CHARLES DICKENS' GREAT EXPECTATIONS

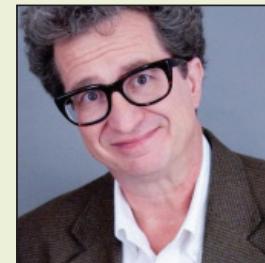
PARK SQUARE THEATRE

Considering its complex psychological scope, *Great Expectations* isn't an obvious candidate for stage adaptation.

The undertaking isn't so surprising, however, upon discovery that Joel Sass is the architect. A consummate craftsman of literary works, Sass was also the driving force behind Park Square Theatre's recent, highly acclaimed take on *Oliver Twist*. Like that previous Dickens' adaptation, *Great Expectations* begins as the tale of an impoverished orphan, but the narrative sophistication and thematic ambition couldn't be more distinctive, following young Pip as his tumultuous life is shaped by chance encounters with, among others, an escaped convict, a wealthy spinster, and a beautiful but emotionally caustic young woman. As Pip endeavors to become a gentleman of high esteem, these past experiences continually inform his present, and suggest that his childhood dream of success is far removed from the reality of his adulthood. Taking on the lead role as Pip, Ryan Colbert is supported by a promising ensemble cast including Hope Cervantes (as the enigmatic Estella) and Barbra Berlovitz (as the embittered Miss Havisham).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 ▶

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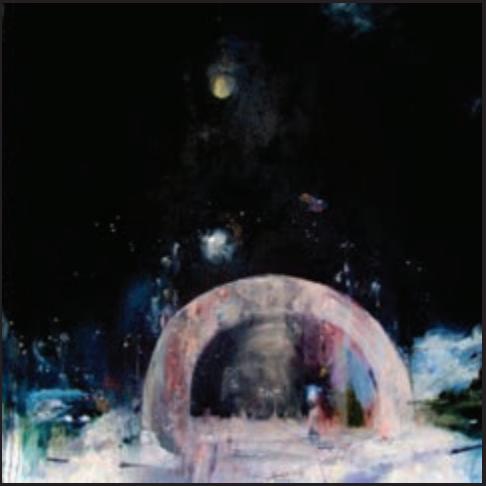
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CONTINUED FROM FRIDAY ▶

SATURDAY 1/16

ART/GALLERY

VALERIE JENKINS AND LAURA STACK: PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS

ROSALUX GALLERY

Together again, in their third joint exhibition at Rosalux Gallery, Laura Stack and Valerie Jenkins further their examinations into abstraction as a means to greater understanding of circumstance and existence. Stack studies experience on a cellular level, exploring the effects science (whether physics, medical practices, or chemical imbalances) has on the body, which she renders in forms and colors bordering on psychedelic. Jenkins, meanwhile, uses shape and line economically to distill the quotidian into expressions at once recognizable, mysterious, and profound. There will be a public reception from 7 to 10 p.m. Saturday, January 16. 1400 Van Buren St. NE, Minneapolis; 612-747-3905.

Through February 7 -BRAD RICHASON

COMEDY

HARI KONDABOLU

THE WOMAN'S CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS

Hari Kondabolu is the comedian of academia. His highly educated takes on bigotry, American hypocrisy, and religious contradictions are so intellectual, they're footnote-worthy. He even titled his debut comedy album, *Waiting for 2042*, after an estimate from the Census Bureau on the year that whites will no longer be the majority racial group in the United States. Yes, Kondabolu does address inane topics like cocoa butter, chocolate, and chess in his standup, but this political comedian and former immigrant-rights organizer with a master's degree in human rights doesn't dumb down the funny for anyone. Raised in Queens by Indian parents, Kondabolu has made the mainstream rounds with his race-centric standup on *Letterman*, *Conan*, and *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* He's also been interviewed by heavyweights Marc Maron and Terry Gross of *Fresh Air*. Whether his topic is colonialism, '60s protest music, prayer in bowling alleys, or the origin of soul food, Kondabolu proves it's not only hip to be square — it's hilarious. All ages. \$15-\$18. 8 p.m. 410 Oak Grove St., Minneapolis; 612-813-5300. -ERICA RIVERA

THEATER

PERICLES

GUTHRIE THEATER

When Joseph Haj joined the Guthrie as artistic director this summer, most of the 2015-16 season had already been set. He was slated to direct *South Pacific* in the summer of 2016, but that was a long time to go without showcasing his skills for Twin Cities audiences. The solution came in a show that he had directed at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and would be on tour. One extension later, and *Pericles* found its way to the winter Guthrie schedule. The play is an early piece by the Bard (and very likely was written by multiple writers) that feels

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Joseph Haj brings his long-running production to the Guthrie

JENNY GRAHAM

more like a serialized adventure than the tightly knit romances that Shakespeare would write later on in his career. The princely title character wishes only to find love, but instead sails off into a string of exploits, with an evil king always at his back. One thing is for sure: The cast is going to be well-versed in the production. "By the time it is done, the actors will have been in *Pericles* for 13 months," says Haj. \$15-\$74. 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays; 7 p.m. Sundays; 1 p.m. on some Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. 818 S. Second St., Minneapolis; 612-377-2224. **Through February 21** -ED HUYCK

SUNDAY 1/17

SPORTS U.S. FIGURE SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS

XCEL ENERGY CENTER

In terms of major American skating competitions, the U.S. Figure Skating Championships is as big as it gets. This year, top athletes are coming to the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul to skate for gold, silver, or bronze in single, pairs, and ice-dance divisions. The Nationals' winners will be reviewed by the USFSA board for approval, and then sent to Boston for the World Championships this March. In women's singles, the record-shattering (and occasionally controversial) Ashley Wagner will return in hopes of winning gold for the fourth year in a row. Gracie Gold, Polina Edmunds, Courtney Hicks, and others will also take the ice for the event. Men's singles will include reigning champion Jason Brown, as well as Max Aaron, Adam Rippon, and Ross Miner. Alexa Scimeca and Chris Knierim are a pair to keep on your radar, as are ice dancers

Madison Chock and Evan Bates. Athletes in each division will skate a short program one evening, followed by a free skate later in the week. The grand finale Sunday night celebrates the top four skaters/pairs in each event with rocking music and dimmed lighting. \$22.50-\$127.50. For a complete schedule and more info, check 2016uschampionships.com. 175 W. Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul; 651-726-8240. **Through January 24** -JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

COMEDY DARREN CARTER

RICK BRONSON'S HOUSE OF COMEDY

Comedian Darren Carter has always been a bit of an outsider. "Yeah, I'm a rebel," he laughs. "I think that was essentially true earlier in my life, growing up. As a redhead, you're an outsider. Something like three percent of the population has red hair." These days, the Fresno, California, native gravitates toward his home life when telling jokes. "My wife is Armenian," he says. "We were a little nervous to see what our baby was going to look like. Has this ever happened in the history of mankind, an Armenian baby with red hair? We were worried he was going to come out angry with an orange unibrow. 'Come on people what took so long? I'm hungry for shishkabob! I want meat on stick!'" Some in his wife's family still don't quite get what he does for a living. "My father-in-law is in his 80s," Carter says. "He'll tell his friends, 'He's a joker. He takes people for their money.'" 18+; 21+ later shows. \$15-\$22. 7:30 p.m. Wednesday through Friday; 9:45 p.m. Friday; 9:30 p.m. Saturday; 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. 408 E. Broadway, Mall of America, Bloomington; 952-858-8558. **Wednesday through Sunday** -P.F. WILSON

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OSCAR HOPEFULS

Five Academy Award aspirants: What to see and what to skip

BY MICHAEL NORDINE

Now that Ricky Gervais has once again made the Golden Globes worth watching and the Academy is set to announce its nominations, you may find yourself wondering whether any of these movies are any good. Some certainly are — if you haven't seen *Mad Max: Fury Road*, *The Hateful Eight*, or *Brooklyn*, set about correcting those egregious oversights sooner rather than later — but those still playing don't exactly represent an embarrassment of riches. Here, in descending order of quality, are the major contenders still in theaters.

5. *Carol*

There's beauty in the margins. Todd Haynes, an accomplished director of women in trouble (see also *Superstar: The Karen Carpenter Story*, *Safe*, and *Far from Heaven*), spins a Patricia Highsmith novel of star-crossed lovers into a tearjerker of utmost restraint. Cate Blanchett and Rooney Mara are the inamoratas in question, and their bond — which develops via an almost unspoken mutual understanding between the two — is too new and undefined for their contemporaries in 1950s society to embrace or even understand. We often catch glimpses of the two through windows and mirrors, as though Haynes wants us to view them through the same distorted lens as those who would keep them apart from one another. Though some may be left cold by the remove at which Haynes keeps us from his superlative leads, others will be putty in his gifted hands.

4. *Trumbo*

In hindsight, what's most surprising about the life of Dalton Trumbo is that it took this long for Hollywood to make a biopic about it. One of 1940s-era Hollywood's most successful and prolific screenwriters, the *Roman Holiday* scribe was also among the Hollywood 10 — artists and technicians banished from the film industry on suspicion of being Communist sympathizers. Bryan Cranston is magnetic in the lead role, imbuing the blacklisted wordsmith's life story with characteristic verve. Watching him openly defy the congressional witch hunt



WILSON WEBB

that was the House Un-American Activities Committee isn't as galvanizing as it's meant to be, but the parade of celebrity-impersonating cameos is more fun than it usually is in these movies. (It also gives the criminally underutilized Diane Lane something to do.) This is hardly free of the bluster that is the hallmark of prestige pictures about "serious" subjects, but there's a certain breeziness to *Trumbo* that keeps it from delighting in its own importance.

3. *The Big Short*

Adam McKay, whose prior films (*Anchorman*, *Step Brothers*) revolved around Will Ferrell's hijinks, now turns his attention to something even more worthy of ridicule than cable news: the ongoing financial crisis. The Ferrell-free ensemble cast includes Christian Bale, Steve Carell, and Ryan Gosling as Wall Street insiders who notice the housing market's downward trend long before anyone else and contrive to profit from it. (Also, they're

the heroes of this story.) McKay's comic sensibilities are better suited to highlighting the many absurdities of this situation than some of the more sanctimonious Wall Street takedowns preceding *The Big Short*, but they don't gel with the film's eventual call for viewers to get outraged at how little has been done to fix the quagmire.

2. *Joy*

Whither the David O. Russell of yore? Idiosyncrasy was once the writer/director's defining trait, apparently to his detriment — after reaching his high-water mark with *Three Kings*, the abrasive filmmaker's confrontational approach toward his actors during *I Heart Huckabees* made him persona non grata. He returned six years later with *The Fighter*, a film as well-behaved as he was said to have become during his six-year hiatus. Here he's once again teaming with Jennifer Lawrence, Robert De Niro, and Bradley Cooper. Though their last two collaborations (*Silver Linings Playbook* and *American Hustle*) grated at times, they were far easier to recommend than this biopic about Joy Mangano, inventor of the Miracle Mop. It's all over the place in the worst way, stacking the deck against its heroine so high that everyone besides her comes across as a one-dimensional cartoon character.

1. *The Danish Girl*

The problem with *The Danish Girl* is the same problem with most movies directed by Tom Hooper: It's directed by Tom Hooper. The same affinity for ultrawide fisheye angles most recently seen in *The King's Speech* and *Les Misérables* continues unabated here, making it feel as though we're watching goldfish rather than, you know, real people experiencing unique circumstances. Chief among them is Eddie Redmayne — fresh off his Oscar win for *The Theory of Everything* and whatever *Jupiter Ascending* was meant to be — as one of the first recorded patients to receive sex-reassignment surgery. This being the 1920s, you can imagine how well that goes over with her peers. That premise doesn't lack for potential, but it's rendered dramatically inert by Hooper's staid staging and shallow characterizations. If you're in the mood for a moving story about the transgender experience, stay home and watch *Tangerine* on Netflix instead. □

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ENTERTAINING EMOTIONAL WRECKAGE

The Beauty Queen of Leenane turns a mother-daughter relationship into a funny car wreck.



Sally Wingert and
Amber Bjork

CHARLES GORRILL

BY ED HUYCK

Everyone has family problems, but the pair in *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* could easily win Worst Mother-Daughter in County Galway.

Mother Mag and daughter Maureen share a decaying home outside of the isolated village of Leenane, along the Irish coast. Mag is essentially housebound, relying on her daughter to be at her beck and call.

Maureen resents the wreckage of her life, finding petty ways to get back at Mag, such as buying a brand of cookies that both of them hate because it will make her mother miserable. They bicker endlessly in a running power play neither can escape.

Mag, meanwhile, is more than a nag. She interferes in her daughter's life, including burning a note informing her that an old friend, Pato, is back in town.

Pato secretly admires Maureen, but never acted on it before moving to London for a job. On a quick break back to the Emerald Isle, he finally lets Maureen know how he feels, leading to the happiest night of her life.

THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE

Park Square Theatre
20 W. 7th Place, St. Paul
Through Jan. 24; 651-291-7005

But Mag gets in the way. Her bitter reaction to Maureen having a life of her own — and possibly leaving — moves her to make Pato as uncomfortable as possible, which drives a wedge between the two.

The dour, desolate relationship between mother and daughter is illuminated to perfection by Sally Wingert and Amber Bjork.

Wingert (Mag) has been among the top actors in the Twin Cities for years, with a skill to disappear, Meryl Streep-like, into roles.

Bjork is a revelation. She's been a solid player throughout her career, but her version of Maureen is arresting. With Pato, she showcases the shy girl who has been pushed aside by decades of hard life. Yet her callousness rises to the fore whenever she's with her mother.

Director Carin Bratlie Wethern described the play as "like watching a car wreck." The power of the performances — and Bratlie Wethern's deft direction — means you can't help but rubberneck. **CP**

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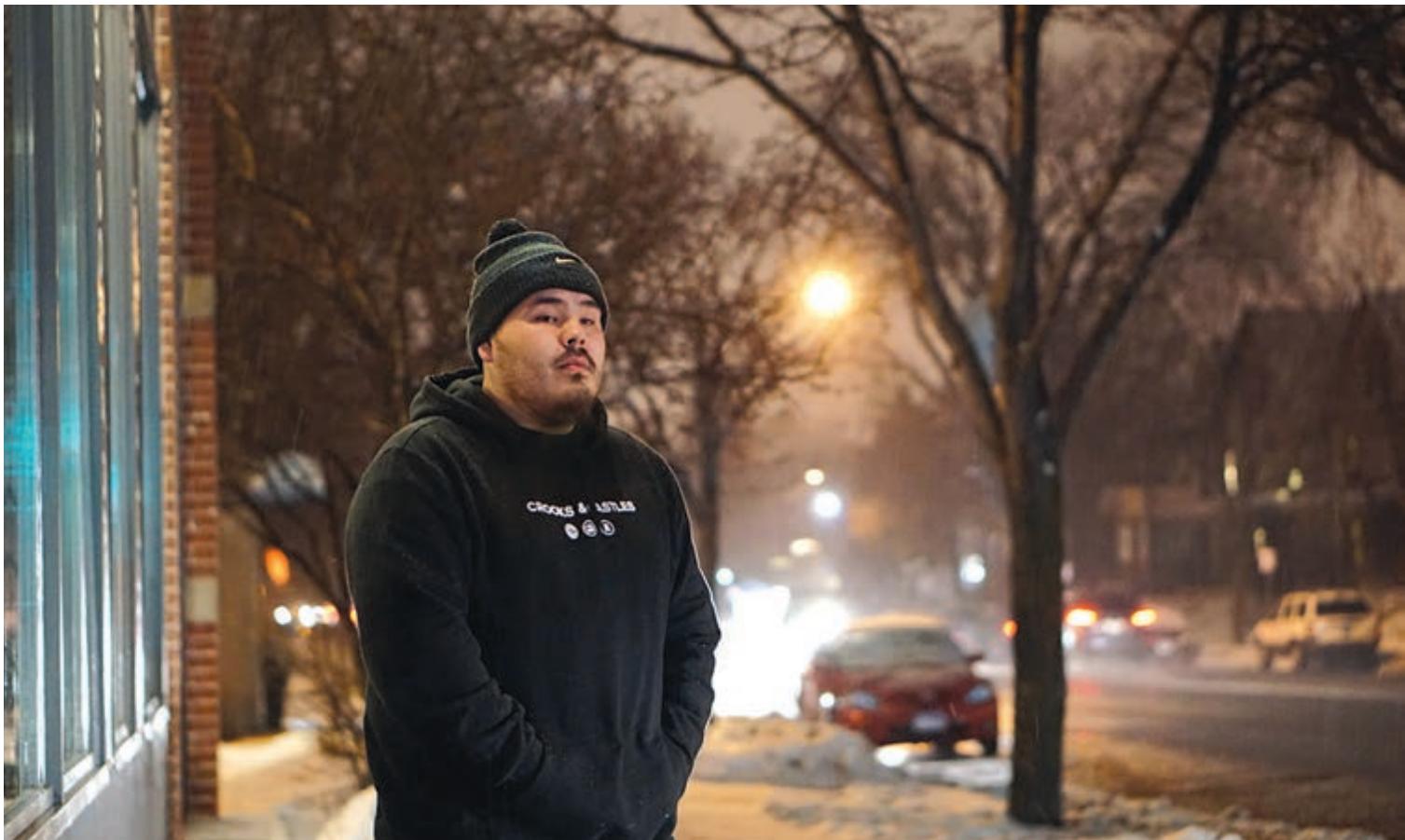
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BABY SHEL'S GAME

Minnesota-born Ojibwe rapper Baby Shel is primed for an explosive 2016.



Baby Shel

JERARD FAGERBERG

JERARD FAGERBERG

Baby Shel leaves a trail of the galvanized behind him.

The Red Lake emcee's percussive baritone and metered flow make him an imposing presence on record, but in the live setting, the 26-year-old rapper is hypnotic. It's this immutable stage presence that won Shel the 2015 Vita.mn Are You Local? best new band competition, but Shel's charisma does have an off switch. Even when discussing his monumental 2015, the towering Sheldon Cook Jr. is humble and taciturn.

"It feels beautiful," he says. "When I first started doing this, I never would've thought I'd be as far as I am right now." He tries to swallow his smile and maintain his earnest, businesslike facade, but he only partially succeeds. "I'm not saying

that I'm where I wanna be, but I'm real happy about it."

Winning Are You Local? earned Shel a spot in First Avenue's Mainroom, \$1,000 cash, and a trip to South by Southwest in Austin, Texas — his first real venture out of the Upper Midwest as a performer. He never sat on that success, instead using it as a catalyst for a yearlong grind that saw him open shows for Twista, Yelawolf, Mya, and Beanie Sigel, among others. He also ventured out to Denver to play a cannabis convention, and nabbed the attention of alt-news giant VICE. This Friday, he'll celebrate a calendar year's worth of success on stage at First Avenue's Best New Bands of 2015 showcase.

For anyone who's never witnessed the Ojibwe rhymer shred a verse live, the year he enjoyed might seem unexpected. For First Ave booker Sonia Grover, Shel's tri-

umph at AYL? was enough to convince her that he had to come back for Best New Bands.

"The energy and vibe at his performance that night was pretty awesome," she says. "It made an effect on everyone that was in the crowd, and that's part of the reason we picked him."

Success comes with its sycophants, and Shel hasn't seen a word of bad press since his AYL? victory, but he can feel that the positivity is coming from a real place. That's why he's planning to double down on his good karma by releasing a free five-song EP titled *Baby Shel's World*.

"For everybody who came out and supported along the way on my come up, I feel like I should give them something for free," he says, noting that this will be the first physical album he's ever produced. "I wanna be able to give them something

BABY SHEL

will perform at First Avenue's Best New Bands of 2015 showcase on Friday, Jan. 15.

official they can have in their hands, something tangible."

Tangibility is something Shel's still getting used to. When he was growing up on the Red Lake Indian Reservation five hours north of the Twin Cities, hip-hop was an unwelcome art form. Community elders demonized rap for perpetuating stereotypes about violence and drug use on reservation lands. If it wasn't for his own parents' love of Notorious B.I.G. and Tupac, he would've never discovered the musical kinship between the inner city and his life on the rez.

"It's the struggle," Shel says of life on the reservation. "We go through a lot of

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MUSIC

the same struggles the urban communities go through. You see a lot of poverty, you see a lot of gangbanging. We got a high suicide rate for young kids. We've had a school shooting. It's a depressing place when you're there — you feel stuck there."

The daily struggle of life on the rez meant that Shel, his mentor Wardog, and his partners in his band 100 Souls didn't have a scene to inherit. Instead, they had to bootstrap their own. In 2010, they founded Rez Rap Records and began promoting hip-hop as a positive outlet for the disenfranchised in Red Lake.

"I just wanna be the voice for the voiceless," Shel says. "Coming from where I'm from, none of my people had chances with something like that. If they see me doing it, maybe I can spark something on my rez."

Since starting his music career, Shel has become a leader in the Minnesota Native American hip-hop scene. In July of 2015, a team from HBO documentary series *VICE* came to Red Lake to interview Shel about the community he's working to establish. Tall Paul, a Native rapper from Minneapolis, is also featured in the forthcoming episode, and he knows the reason the film crew chose to focus on Shel.

"The first time I seen him perform, I was like, 'This dude's got talent, he's got the potential to go places,'" Paul says. "And that's beneficial to all other Native emcees, especially from this area."

Long Doe Records' Big WiZ saw that breakthrough potential in Shel when he first met the fiery emcee back in 2010.

"Everything he did was pure talent," WiZ remembers. "Everything was good,

and I haven't heard a whack version from Shel yet."

Alongside his partner Tony Bones, WiZ — who also works under the name Nic Swisher — has been a fully galvanized pusher for Shel for about a year. Together, the two worked to produce *Baby Shel's World* as well as an upcoming LP at their recording studio in Minneapolis.

"We're all in this together, it's all about Baby Shel, and there are no egos," WiZ says. "He's a special artist, and he has an opportunity to go reach beyond this Minnesota demographic and touch the world."

The still-unnamed album is set to feature guest verses from Muja Messiah, I Self Devine, and Twista, as well as production courtesy of Bobby Raps, Nicodemus, and possibly Big Jess. Their team has lofty goals — one of which includes securing a spot at Rhymesayers fest Soundset in May — but the ultimate goal is to have Shel blow up outside of Minnesota.

"I feel like I did all I could in 2015 in Minnesota and around Minnesota," Shel says. "I really wanna get out to L.A. and New York City, all these big markets and see how I swim there. It's gonna be a big year for us."

Between all the good news and flattery, it'd be easy for a freshman artist to get their perspective warped, but Shel remains measured in his approach. Positivity is like gunpowder to Baby Shel: The more of it he collects, the more people he can convert with his explosive live shows.

"I like to soak in game — I like to listen and learn, improve," he says. "The vibes people give me, I just bottle them up, and when I get on stage, I just go." ☀

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TEENAGE MOODS

7TH STREET ENTRY, FRIDAY 1.15

While their sound has grown more colorful, even poppier, Minneapolis band Teenage Moods have been steadfast in their sheer ability to produce crisp, unpretentious rock songs. It's a craft they've learned from '80s and '90s Rough Trade and K Records bands: steady growth instead of popularity grabs. Over the past seven years, Teenage Moods have cranked out release after release powered by the vocals of Gordon Byrd, driving guitar lines, and a sturdy rhythm section. To call them a local band is only appropriate to a certain extent; last September, Madrid label Tenorio Cotobade issued a 12-inch Teenage Moods EP called *Select Buds*, composed of five highlights from the band's 2014 *Rosebuds* LP. The release of *Select Buds*, which tonight's show celebrates, should bring the band wider international expo-

sure. 18+. \$5. 8 p.m. 701 First Ave. N. Minneapolis; 612-338-8388. —MICHAEL MADDEN

DUSTIN THOMAS

7TH STREET ENTRY, SATURDAY 1.16

"I think there's awful norms about what being a musician is," singer-songwriter and Augsburg College grad Dustin Thomas said in a 2013 interview with 89.3 the Current. It's a statement that defines his entire musical existence: Few artists are as uncompromising and independent-minded in their actions as Thomas, whose music can be described as "universal" if anyone's can. Aside from his work as a member of Nahko and Medicine for the People, he's made his name as a solo artist with songs that feature nothing more than singing and acoustic guitar (okay, he beatboxes, too). That doesn't mean his songs are simple or minimal — far from it. Lyrically, Thomas addresses big themes like war and peace and love and hate, all

the while expressing deeply personal yet relatable feelings. His hard-hitting line found on song "Strong Like Jah" — "Today I burned all my money" — typifies his passion. Thomas is a born performer above all, having developed his artistry while busking and touring the world. 18+. \$10-\$12. 9 p.m. 701 First Ave. N. Minneapolis; 612-338-8388. —MICHAEL MADDEN

KRAYZIE BONE

TRIPLE ROCK SOCIAL CLUB, SATURDAY 1.16

It could've been a year of pure reflection for founding Bone Thugs-n-Harmony member Krayzie Bone; 2015 marked the 20th anniversary of BTNH's hyper-melodic rap masterpiece *E. 1999 Eternal*, and its hit singles "Tha Crossroads" and "1st of tha Month." Instead, he was focused on wrapping up the first part of his three-volume album, *Chasing the Devil*, his first solo project since winning a 2007 Grammy for his appearance on Chamillionaire's "Ridin'." Given the influence he and the rest of BTNH have had on rappers like A\$AP Rocky and Freddie Gibbs, it's unsurprising that *Chasing the Devil* songs like "Like Fire" fit into the modern era as seamlessly as Krayzie's flows interlocked with DJ U-Neek's beats two decades ago. Krayzie, 42, has also matured as a writer, wholeheartedly tackling the themes of temptation and death that the album's title implies. 18+. \$15-\$30. 8 p.m. 318 First Ave. N. Minneapolis; 612-338-8100. —MICHAEL MADDEN

—MICHAEL MADDEN

LIVING COLOUR

DAKOTA JAZZ CLUB, SUNDAY 1.17

When Living Colour burst on the scene in the late '80s, its innovative fusion sound and dazzling success — hit song "Cult of Personality"; Grammy award; tour with the Rolling Stones — sparked a reconciliation between black artists and the rock 'n' roll world. By linking hard rock to a bubbling brew of R&B, soul, jazz, funk, and eventually metal and hip-hop, LC opened doors still wildly spinning today. As is LC itself, which includes virtuoso guitarist Vernon Reid, charismatic vocalist Corey Glover, and the slippery thunder of drummer Will Calhoun and bassist Doug Wimbish. While still awaiting release of the long-promised *Shade* LP, Living Colour continues touring with explosive, eclectic performances of LC originals and diverse covers. The *Shade* material reportedly is more blues oriented, but also continues LC's tradition of social commentary with a version of Notorious B.I.G.'s "Who Shot Ya." Recent shows featured tributes to both Tamir Rice, the 12-year-old boy shot by Cleveland police, and Motörhead's recently departed Lemmy Kilmister. \$50-\$60. 7 p.m.

1010 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis; 612-332-5299. —RICK MASON

BULLY

FINE LINE MUSIC CAFE, MONDAY 1.18

While there are plenty of upcoming bands that share musical qualities with grungy Nashville rockers Bully, few are in the same position in the music industry. Signed to Columbia, they have a potent platform for releasing their music, especially for a '90s-influenced rock band. And they've justified that unique spot with jolting, cathartic songs like "I Remember" and "Trying." Their 2015 debut album, *Feels Like*, is a half-hour burst of burning riffs and pounding drums, produced and co-engineered by singer, guitarist, and Rosemount native Alicia Bognanno, a former intern at Steve Albini's Electrical Audio recording facility. If this were the '90s, Bully might be misconstrued as a riot grrrl band because of lone female member Bognanno's Kathleen Hanna-esque command as a bandleader. But in light of other emerging acts like Waxahatchee, White Lung, and Screaming Females, it's easy to see Bully for what they are: one of our most promising young bands, regardless of gender configuration. 18+. \$15-\$30. 8 p.m. 318 First Ave. N. Minneapolis; 612-338-8100. —MICHAEL MADDEN

DAVELL CRAWFORD TRIBUTE TO ALLEN TOUSSAINT

DAKOTA JAZZ CLUB, MONDAY & TUESDAY 1.18-19

New Orleans and the world lost a towering icon when debonair pianist, songwriter, producer, and arranger Allen Toussaint died in November. A wonderful pianist in the great Crescent City tradition, Toussaint, 77, wrote a slew of Big Easy standards — "It's Raining," "Fortune Teller," "Mother-in-Law" — for the likes of Irma Thomas, Ernie K-Doe, and Lee Dorsey. He also worked with the Band, Paul McCartney, Patti LaBelle, and Elvis Costello. Davell Crawford, aka the Piano Prince of New Orleans, is a fine, gospel-influenced singer, accomplished keyboardist, and legit heir to Toussaint's legacy. As a kid, Crawford hung out at family friend Toussaint's Sea-Saint Studio. He played at Toussaint's funeral, including backing Thomas on "Walk Around Heaven All Day." At these tribute shows, Crawford promises to rummage through Toussaint's extensive songbook, from "Java" to "Southern Nights." Accompanying him will be drummer LeShawn Lee, guitarist Jamieson Ledonio, and bassist Roland Guerin, who often played with Toussaint. \$25-\$35 at 7 p.m. \$20-\$30 at 9 p.m. 1010 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis; 612-332-5299. —RICK MASON

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Racist Preferences

Casual racism is ruining my sex life

A queer man of color—I'm Asian—I feel wounded whenever I am exposed to gay men in New York City, Toronto, or any city where white gay men dominate. Gay men reject me because of my race and no one admits to their sexual racism. I understand that sexual attraction is subconscious for many people, but it is unfair for a gay Asian like myself to be constantly marginalized and rejected. I fight for gay rights, too. I believe in equality, too. I had the same pain of being gay in high school and the same fears when coming out. Why is there no acceptance, no space, no welcome for me in this white-painted gay community? I'm six-foot-one, 160 pounds, fit, and very good-looking. What can I do? I might as well be a sexless monk.



Dan Savage

ized, and we all need to confront our own prejudices.

Even you, EDDIE. You cite your height (tall!), weight (slim!), and looks (VGL!) as proof you've faced sexual rejection based solely on your race. But short, heavy, average-looking/unconventionally attractive guys face rejection for not being tall, lean, or conventionally hot, just as you've faced rejection for not being white.

Booster, who manages to have plenty of sex in New York's "white-painted gay community," had some practical tips for you. "EDDIE should stay away from the apps if the experience becomes too negative," Booster said. "If logging on to a hookup app bums him out, take a

break. Being a double minority can be isolating, but living in a big city can be great. There are meetups and clubs and activities for all stripes. Join a gay volleyball league — truly where gay Asian men thrive — or find one of the many gay Asian nights at one of the gay bars around the city. They're out there."

Chu has also managed to find romantic success in New York. "I've been where EDDIE is, except shorter, less fit, and less good-looking, and somehow I found a husband," said Chu. "The monastery wasn't my calling, and I suspect it's not EDDIE's either."

A quick word to gay white men: It's fine to have "preferences." But we need to examine our preferences and give some thought to the cultural forces that may have shaped them. And there's no excuse for littering Grindr or Tinder or Recon with dehumanizing garbage like "no Asians," "no Blacks," "no femmes," "no fatties," etc.

The last word goes to Booster: "A note to the rice queens who will undoubtedly write in about this man: We like that you like us. But liking us solely because of our race can be uncomfortable at best, and creepy as hell at worst. In my experience, it's perfectly okay to keep some of those preferences behind the curtain while you get to know us a bit as humans first."

mail@savagelove.net

Follow Dan on Twitter: @fakedansavage

A full-page photograph of a woman with long, wavy blonde hair, wearing a red and black lingerie set. She is standing against a red, textured background. A small, ornate dagger is pinned to her belly button. Her hands are resting on her hips. The bottom of the image features an oval-shaped frame with a red border and white stars, containing the text "Dream Girls".

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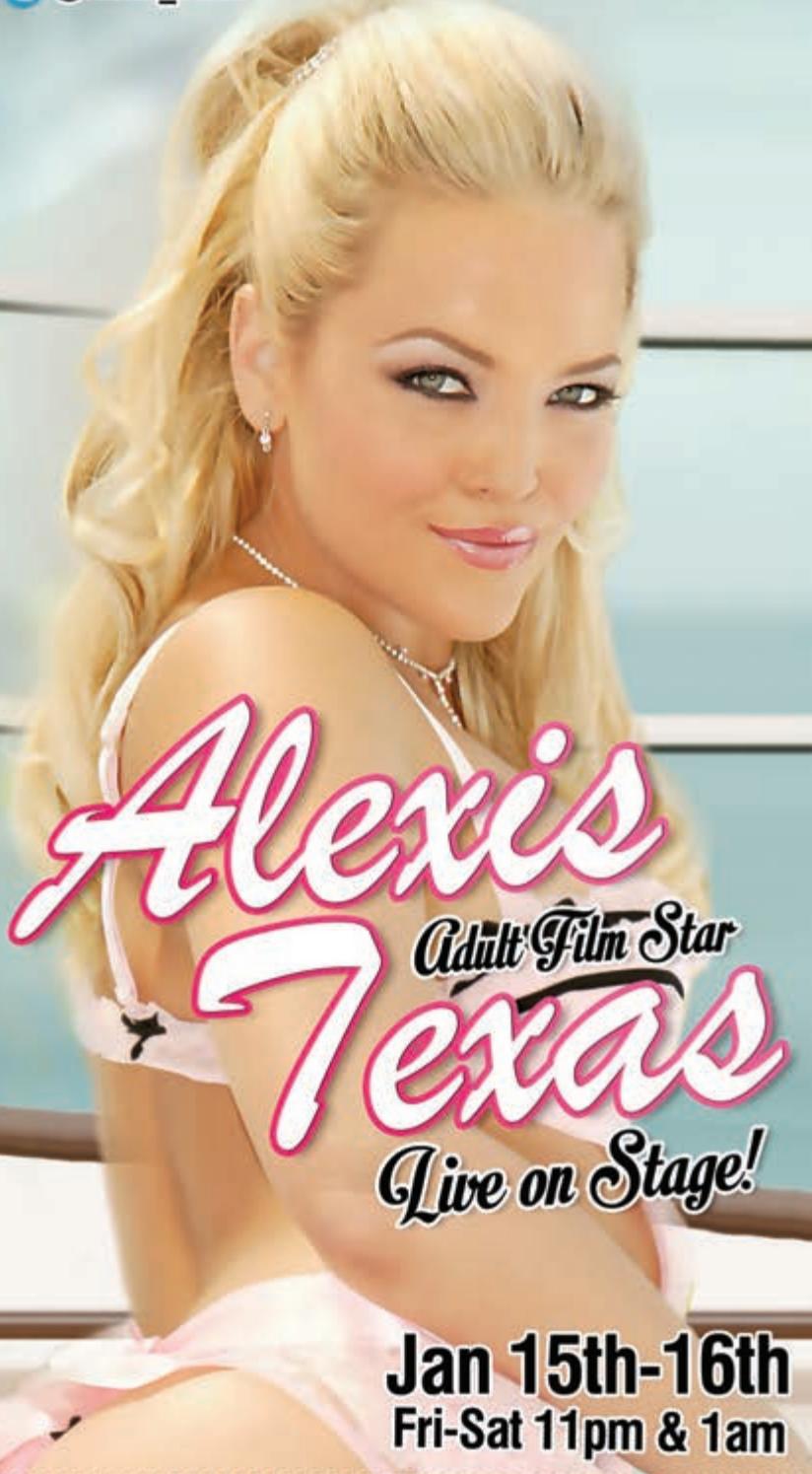


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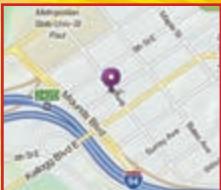
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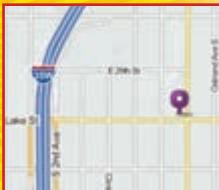
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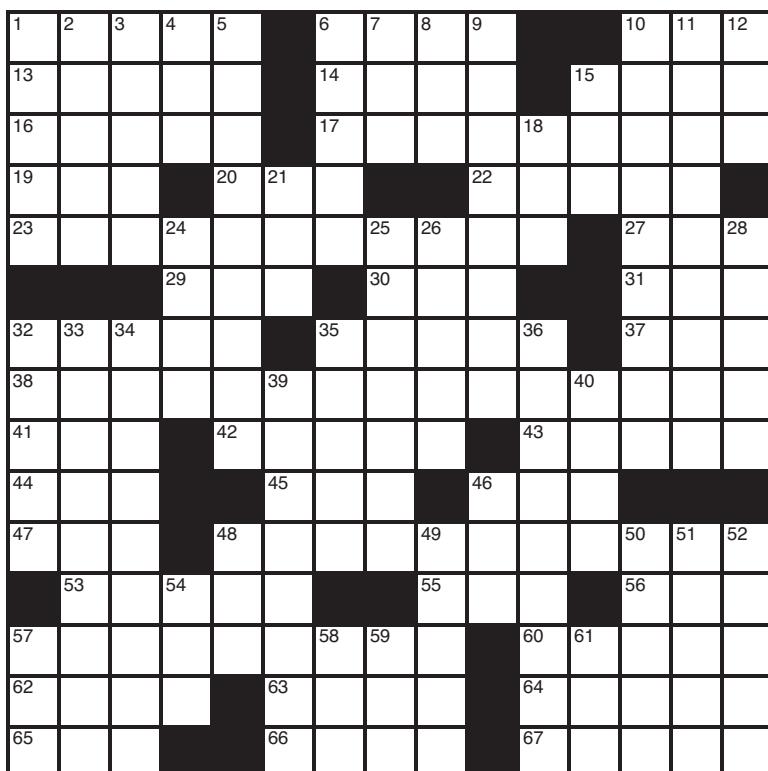
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